



**WESTAR Travel Expense
Reimbursement
Policy # FA-00-06**

Revised: January 1, 2007

Purpose:

These procedures are to be used by anyone seeking reimbursement from WESTAR for travel-related expenses.

Definitions:

Ad hoc travel funds – funds set aside by a state to support travel to WESTAR related activities.

Operating funds – all grant and contract funds besides ad hoc travel funds.

General Notes:

Individuals seeking reimbursement from WESTAR for travel-related expenses must comply with these procedures, including WESTAR staff and others who have received prior authorization in accordance with this policy. Familiarity with these procedures and adherence to the requirements and limitations will expedite reimbursements and avoid travelers incurring costs that will not be reimbursed.

WESTAR's annual work plan and budget allocates travel funds to support staff, committee members, Board members, and others in work plan related activities. Typically, operating funds are budgeted to support staff travel to meetings, training, and other work-related activities included in the annual work plan. Ad hoc travel funds are managed by WESTAR to support travel by state staff. Since these funds are set aside by individual states, priorities on the use of these funds are established by the state, and reimbursement is provided based on reimbursement requests approved by the state air director or his/her designee in accordance with this policy.

Process Steps/Descriptions:

1. Travelers must first ensure that adequate funds are available to support requested travel. Travelers should submit a Travel Authorization Form to WESTAR at least 14 days prior to travel. Failure to secure authorization may result in denial of reimbursement claims. This form may be downloaded from WESTAR's website at www.westar.org/downloads.

Travelers seeking authorization for ad hoc travel support must submit Travel Authorization Forms that have been approved by the state air director or his/her designee.

2. Review the policies (below) to determine expenses that are allowable under this policy.
3. Upon completion of travel, complete and submit a Travel Expense Claim form, requesting reimbursement only for allowable expenses detailed below. Include all receipts and fill out the form completely. The completed Expense Claim should be sent to the WESTAR Official who authorized your travel. Expense Claim Forms may be downloaded from WESTAR's website at www.westar.org/downloads.

Policies:

Travel reimbursement procedures vary from state to state depending upon internal administrative policies. WESTAR will reimburse travelers for allowable expenses, as noted below. Travelers should plan ahead and book travel early to avoid costly airfares. Where internal policies require that all travel costs be managed within the agency, WESTAR can directly reimburse the agency, in lieu of the traveler, for travel costs. Travel reimbursement claims should be submitted to WESTAR within thirty days (30) of travel with original receipts attached. Receipts are required for all allowable expenses greater than \$20.00. Travel advances are not allowed.

Allowable Expenses

1. Actual cost of lodging including tax and surcharges, if any. Claimants are encouraged to stay at the facility associated with the meeting. Requests for reimbursement of amounts greater than rates charged at the meeting location (when designated) may be approved at the discretion of the WESTAR Director. Lodging receipts must be submitted with the reimbursement request.
2. The actual cost of coach airfare or lowest available air transportation is reimbursable. Original receipts are required

3. Expenses for other forms of transportation related to travel on WESTAR business, including rail, bus, shuttles, and parking are reimbursable. Receipts are required if the amounts paid is more than \$20.00.
4. Taxi fares incurred between airports and meeting locations or between airports and home will be reimbursed when shuttle service is not available. Receipts are required if taxi fare exceeds \$20.00.
5. Travelers using privately owned vehicles will be reimbursed for WESTAR business-related travel at the current federal mileage reimbursement rate for privately owned vehicles. The current rate is annotated on WESTAR's Travel Expense Claim form, which is updated whenever the rate is revised by the U.S. General Services Administration and a majority of the WESTAR Council has approved the revised rate.
6. Tipping and telephone charges are not reimbursable.
7. Any car rental should receive pre-approval by the State Director, and prior notification and approval of WESTAR. The Executive Director may deny requests for reimbursement, for cause, when prior authorization has not been provided.
8. Meal expenses will be reimbursed at a rate not to exceed the standard per diem rate. The standard per diem rate is determined annually based on an average of the federal M&EI per diem rates for WESTAR's capital cities, excluding Alaska and Hawaii, and shall be approved by a majority of the WESTAR Council before being implemented. The current rate is annotated on WESTAR's Travel Expense Claim form. Meal expenses will not be reimbursed for meals that are provided by a meeting/conference host, nor when departing after reasonable meal hour and upon returning prior to reasonable meal hour.

Note: Reimbursement is based on WESTAR Policy, not the agency policy of the traveler. The agency may chose to be reimbursed at rates less the allowable rates provided for in WESTAR policy.



Approval:

WESTAR President

Date: January 1, 2007